WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1. A method, comprising:

2   determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and

3   when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and

4   transmitting an instant message comprising the text.

1   2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2   when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and

3   transmitting the instant message, wherein the instant message comprises the input text.

1   3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

2   receiving the instant message;

3   determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4   when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input

5   text to speech.

1   4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2   receiving the instant message;

3   determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4   when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to

5   speech.

1   5. The method of claim 4, wherein the speech option at the destination device is

2   independent of the speech option at the origin device.

1   6. A method, comprising:

2   receiving an instant message at a destination-client device, wherein the instant

3   message comprises text; and

4   determining whether a speech option at the destination-client device is selected

5   and if true converting the text to speech.

1   7. The method of claim 6, wherein when the determining operation is false, displaying the

2   text.

1   8. The method of claim 6, wherein the speech option at the destination-client device is

2   independent of a speech option at an origin-client device, wherein the origin-client device

3   originated the instant message.

1   9. The method of claim 6, wherein the instant message is received across a long-lived

2   connection.

1   10. A computing device, comprising:

2   a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech

3   when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message

4   performed speech input.

1   11. The computing device of claim 10, further comprising:

2   a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be

3   transmitted when the speech option is selected.

1   12. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received

2   across a long-lived connection.

1   13. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received via

2   a request-reply pair.

1   14. An instant-messaging system, comprising:

2   an instant-messaging server;

3   a controller to determine whether a speech option is selected at an origin-client

4   device and to send an instant message to the instant-messaging server; and

5   a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text when the speech option is

6   selected, wherein the instant message comprises the text.

1   15. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2   receive the instant message on a long-lived connection.

1   16. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2   send the instant message to a destination-client device.

1   17. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2   drop the instant message when a destination-client device is not connected.

1   18. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, further comprising:

2   a destination controller to determine whether a speech option is selected at a

3   destination-client device; and

4   a text-to-speech converter to convert text to speech when the speech option at the

5   destination-client device is selected independent of the speech option at an the origin-

6   client device.

1   19. An instant-messaging system, comprising:

2   an instant messaging server;

3   an origin-client device, comprising:

4   an origin controller to determine whether an origin-speech option is

5   selected at the origin-client device and to send an instant message to the instant-

6   messaging server,

7   a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text when the origin-speech

8   option is selected, wherein the instant message comprises the text; and

9   a destination-client device, comprising:

10   a destination controller to determine whether a destination-speech option is

11   selected at the destination-client device and to receive the instant message from

12   the instant-messaging server, and

13   a text-to-speech converter to convert the text to speech when the

14   destination-speech option is selected.

1   20. The instant-messaging system of claim 19, wherein the origin-speech option is

2   independent of the destination-speech option.

1   21. A signal-bearing medium comprising instructions, wherein the instructions when read

2   and executed by a processor comprise:

3   determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and

4   when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and

5   transmitting an instant message to an instant-messaging server, wherein the instant

6   message comprises the text.

1   22. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:

2   when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and

3   transmitting the instant message to the instant-messaging server, wherein the instant

4   message comprises the input text.

1   23. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:

2   receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;

3   determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4   when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to

5   speech.

1   24. The signal-bearing medium of claim 22, further comprising:

2   receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;

3   determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4   when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input

5   text to speech.

1   25. The signal-bearing medium of claim 23, wherein the speech option at the destination

2   device is independent of the speech option at the origin device.

1   26. A pager, comprising:

2   a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech

3   when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message

4   performed speech input.

1   27. The pager of claim 26, further comprising:

2   a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be

3   transmitted when the speech option is selected.

1   28. The pager of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received across a long-

2   lived connection.

1   29. The pager device of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received via a

2   request-reply pair.